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C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 002688

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DETP FOR AF/SPG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/16/2016

TAGS: PREL PGOV UN SU

SUBJECT: DARFUR ANALYSIS: SPLM MAINTAINS SUPPORT OF UNPKO

REF: A. KHARTOUM 02280

¶B. KHARTOUM 02433

¶C. LONDON 7681

Classified By: P/E Chief E. Whitaker, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶11. (C) The Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) continues to vocally support a UN peace-keeping operation (UNPKO) in Darfur. First Vice President and President of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) Salva Kiir recently told an Arabic-language paper in London that his position is clear and unwavering, but added that the National Congress Party (NCP) must agree to any action. At the September SPLM Executive Committee meeting, one of two policy statements affirmed support for UN troops. At the same meeting, the SPLM ordered foreign Minister Lam Akol to stop publicly rejecting a UN mission (Ref A). According to State Minister at the Presidency Telar Deng, Kiir is now reportedly more determined than ever to host a conference on non-signatories in the near future.

SPLM Wants to Expand North

¶12. (C) Taking leadership in Darfur is in line with the SPLM's plan to expand its base in the North. By building on the image of the SPLM as the protector of all marginalized Sudanese, created by late leader Dr. John Garang, the SPLM hopes it can garner support among the disenfranchised nationwide. This is especially important to northern sector leaders such as Yassir Arman and Mansour Khalid, who would be left isolated if the South separated.

SPLM Cons: Limited Capacity, Questionable Commitment

¶13. (C) The SPLM initially was slow to take a firm stand on Darfur, largely because of worries that it was already overstretched trying to implement the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and establish the GoSS. Many in the party also believed that rebuking the NCP so publicly could hurt the little cooperation that existed on the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). In fact, the SPLM stand has made it appear impotent in the unity government and has further strained its relationship with the NCP. Ibrahim Ahmad Umar, NCP Vice Chairman, even threatened to abrogate the CPA over this issue (Ref B).

¶14. (C) On the homefront, most of the SPLM's southern constituency believe trying to gain political power in the north is futile, that separation is inevitable, and that all efforts should be on the CPA and developing the south. Kiir has complained publicly and privately that the focus on Darfur has shifted attention and resources that should be

helping to implement the CPA (Ref C).
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